



AIRBORNE GERM TRANSMISSION

What is AIRBORNE GERM TRANSMISSION?

When diseases and viruses are transmitted as very small particles by air currents, it is called airborne germ transmission.

How do infections spread?

Airborne infections spread when bacteria or viruses travel on dust particles or small respiratory droplets that become aerosolized when an infected person sneezes or coughs. Healthy people can inhale the infectious droplets, or the droplets can land on their eyes, nose and mouth.

People who inhale the airborne germs do not have to have face-to-face contact or be in the same room as the infected person. To protect their patients, hospitals have special air handling and ventilation systems in some rooms.

What illnesses are spread this way?

Many respiratory diseases and viruses spread by the airborne route such as: tuberculosis, measles and chickenpox.

How can one prevent airborne germ transmission?

DPH recommends frequent and thorough hand washing as the most effective way to prevent infections. DPH also advises against sharing personal items like drinking cups, eating utensils and hand towels. Effective protection measures include covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and disinfecting commonly used surfaces.

For more information:

Visit the CDC website: www.cdc.gov.